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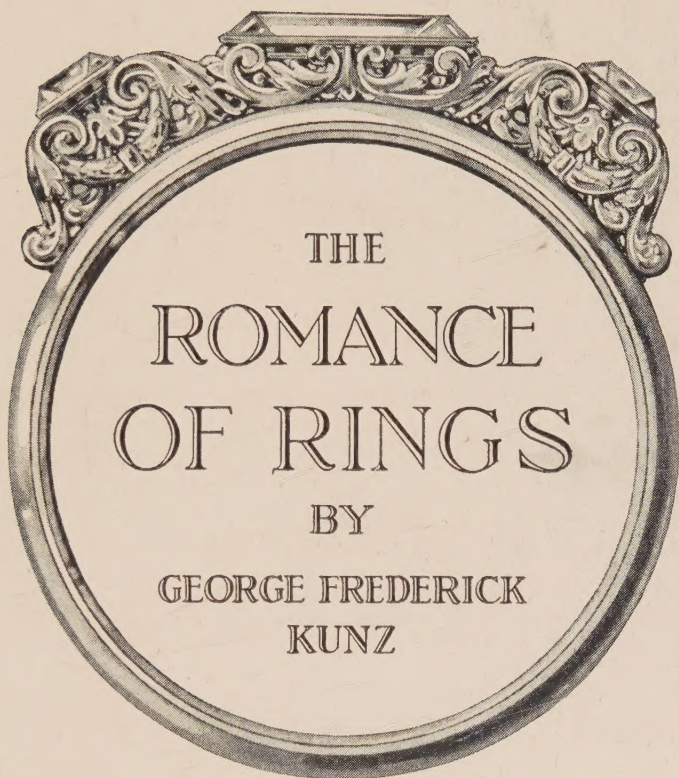
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THE MENTOR, published monthly, on the first of the month, by The Crowell Publishing Company at Springfield, Ohio, U. S. A. Subscription, \$4.00 a year in the United States and Canada; foreign postage, 50 cents extra. Single copies, 35 cents. Subscribers are notified that change of address must reach us five weeks in advance of the next day of issue. January, 1925, Serial No. 263. Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Springfield, Ohio, under the Act of March 3, 1879



THE story of the ring is essentially a human story. The ring is intimately associated with the significant events of life, from the cradle to the grave. The origin of the ring, the purposes and methods of wearing rings; historic rings and royal signet rings; the religious use of rings and the meaning of betrothal and wedding rings; magic rings and rings of healing—these are subjects covered in the following pages by the most distinguished living authority on gems and precious stones.



"THE RING"

From a painting by John W. Alexander in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

The MENTOR

Vol. 12
No. 12



SERIAL
NO. 263

JANUARY, 1925



HE ROMANCE OF RINGS

BY
GEORGE F. KUNZ

Author of "Rings," "The Magic of Jewels
and Charms," "The Book of the Pearl," etc.



SIGNET RING OF GOLD

(73.2 grammes)

XVIII DYNASTY

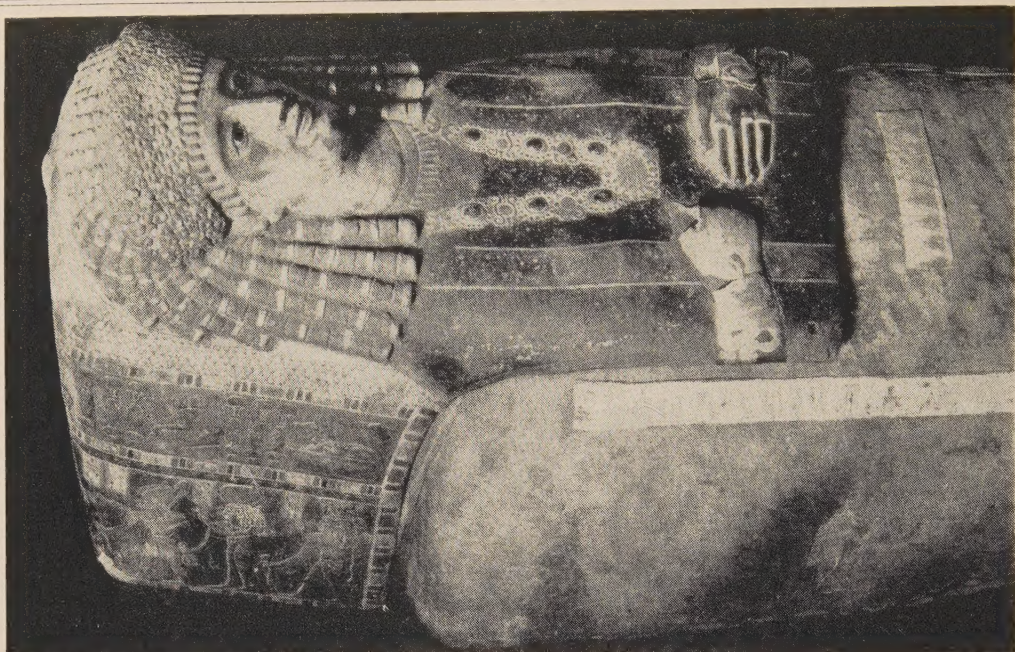
Engraved with name of
Pharaoh Tutankhamen
Such rings were given
to the holder of an office
as the seal and badge
of authority

In the Metropolitan Museum, New York

In the ring, as a symbol and as a material force, the history of the world is bound up—and, in particular, the life of the individual. Consider the part that the ring plays in the case of a single human being; a part beginning with the cradle and enduring to the grave. Often a natal stone, or a ring set with a natal stone, is given to a child at its birth. At baptism the child receives the talismanic gem of the guardian angel. At confirmation the gem of the month is given. At graduation from school or college a class ring is bestowed. Finally the promise to marry is marked by the gift of a ring set with any one of the precious stones from the man to the woman; and the union itself has been symbolized for ages by the circlet of pure gold or, since 1900, of platinum; or even by a diamond circlet.

All this applies to the ordinary life in our own intensely practical age. Generally speaking, it also applied to the lives of individuals in the past. But in the past the ring had often many other meanings. The imagination frequently invested it with magic powers. In the mythology of the ancients it played a conspicuous part. Bound up with the ring is the Promethean legend as the Greeks knew it. Prometheus dared to steal fire from heaven for the use of mortal man. For this act, which angered the gods who were supposed to dwell upon Mount Olympus, he was doomed by Jupiter to be chained for thirty thousand years to a rock in the Caucasus, while a vulture fed upon his vitals. In time, however, Jupiter relented and liberated Prometheus; nevertheless, in order to avoid a violation of the original sentence, it was ordained that Prometheus should wear a link of his chain on one of his fingers as a ring, and in this ring was set a fragment of the rock to which he had been chained, so that he might still be regarded as bound to the Caucasian rock. So here, in this old Greek legend, we first find the ring with a stone set in it.

EDITORIAL NOTE: For their generous coöperation in the work of preparing this article, acknowledgment is made to Dr. Kunz's publishers, the J. B. Lippincott Company.



In the Metropolitan Museum, Morgan Collection

THE MUMMY CASE OF ARTEMIDORA

Daughter of an Egyptian Pharaoh who reigned in the first century A. D. Three rings worn by the princess are reproduced in gilt on the outer wrappings of the figure

One of the earliest uses of the ring was as a stamp indicating conveyance of power. A king or a great commander entrusted his ring to a subordinate as a proof that the person carrying the ring was authorized to execute a certain order. Or the engraved design or device of the ring was impressed upon letters as the sign manual of the writer. That use of the ring dated from the ancient Egyptians and prevailed in many parts of the world. Closely allied in idea to the rings put to these uses were the rings given as marks of official dignity and rank. For example, of prime importance were the rings bestowed upon and worn by the higher ecclesiastics. Papal rings, among which the most noted is the "Fisherman's Ring,"* were usually broken and destroyed at a pope's death; rings for cardinals and for bishops, and also occasionally in former times for abbots, were, and still are, regarded with special reverence in the Roman and Greek churches. The usage of wearing rings of this type dates far back in the history of Christianity.

The religious idea was also in the rings bearing Christian emblems, in the rings worn by nuns, and by widows who had vowed never to re-wed. Closely allied to these religious rings are the betrothal and wedding rings. Then there were the rings worn as charms and talismans. Often the peculiar form of the circlet was believed to have a symbolic virtue; but more frequently the

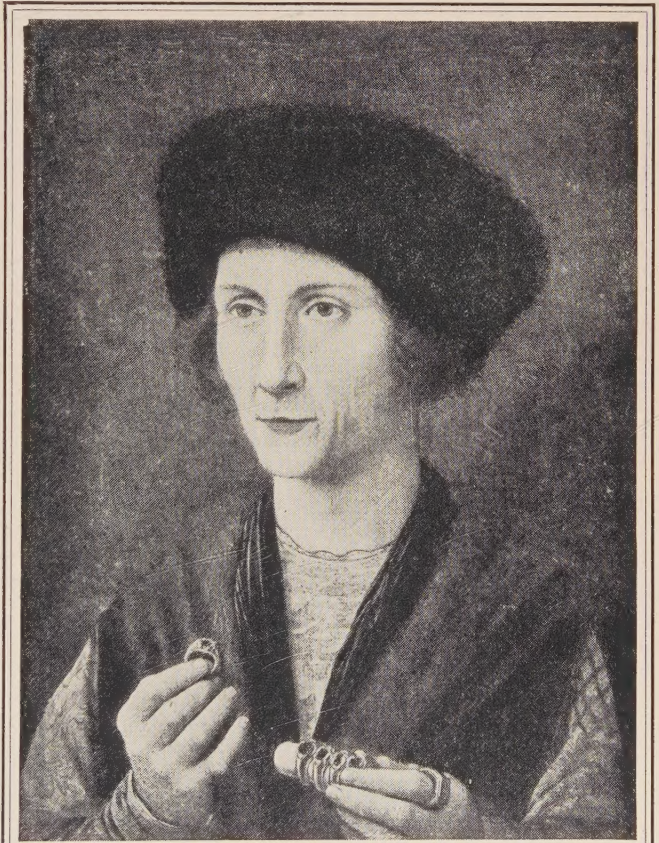
*The form of the ecclesiastical ring is an ellipse, and is known as *anulus piscis*, or the gut of a fish. For Peter was a fisherman.

talismanic quality depended upon some curious engraved device, upon the stones set in the rings, or upon a mystic or religious inscription. In the fourth century after Christ many Romans were wearing rings made from the bone of an ostrich, believing that a ring of this composition possessed magic powers.

In ancient mythology the god Mercury was popularly regarded as a bestower of magic rings. Men then believed in the existence, or at any rate in the possibility, of wonder-working rings; in the ring that preserved the owner in health and protected him from wounds and other injuries; in the ring that made the bearer invisible; in the ring that gave the strength of ten men; in the ring that endowed the owner with the power to fly through the air. The crowning gift, however, would be the ring possessing the virtue of attracting the love of all beautiful women and the affection and esteem of fellow men.

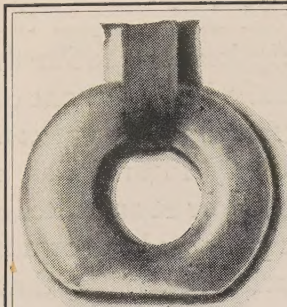
Rings of healing were talismans valued for their special power to cure disease. Once a ring made out of the hoof of a rhinoceros was supposed to have efficacy against poisons and spasms. Rings that had been kept in a glass with a blinded lizard until the lizard had regained its sight were taken out and were used for the cure of weak and weeping eyes. A ring made out of narwhal tusk was believed to be an effective antidote to poisons. A toadstone set in an open ring, so that the stone could touch the skin, was thought to give warning of the presence of poison by producing a sensation of heat in the skin at the point of contact. Then there were the famous "cramp rings," which dated from the time of Edward II of England, (1307-1327) and were long regarded as specifics for the cure of cramps and convulsions, and even of epileptic attacks. They were believed to owe their supposed virtue merely to the royal blessing they had received.

Particularly fascinating



"THE GOLDSMITH," by Jacques Louis David

The *bacula*, or ring rod, has been in use by jewelers for a thousand years or more



Courtesy of the author

BETROTHAL RING OF THE VIRGIN MARY

Now an object of pilgrimage in the cathedral of Perugia, Italy. Legend says the ring was given by Mary to St. John and was taken by him to Rome. The precious bit of chalcedony later appears in chronicles of Christian converts who attributed to the ring miraculous virtues. In the fifteenth century the betrothal ring came into possession of the Perugians. On four days of the year it is exposed to the gaze of the faithful

to the imagination is the idea of magic power once attributed to certain rings. No ancient talisman enjoyed a greater repute in medieval legend than the "Ring of Solomon," or "Solomon's Seal," as it was often called. An Arab legend tells that by means of

the power that was in this ring the Hebrew king was able to succeed in all his undertakings. However, for a space of forty years, he was deprived of its aid, as he once thoughtlessly took it off his hand when he was in the bath, and it was carried away by an evil genius. At the end of forty years it was found again in the body of a fish served on the monarch's table. In Rabbinical legend this ring is said to have been set with a marvelous precious stone, perhaps a diamond, which served as a magic mirror wherein Solomon was able to reflect the image of any distant place or of any persons in regard to whom he wished to be informed.

A variant of this legend is found in another Arabian version, which says that Solomon was so much infatuated with a female prisoner, the daughter of a Gentile prince, and named "Aminah," that he entrusted to her the care of his precious signet, given to him by the four angels that presided over the four elements. A mighty jinn succeeded in gaining possession of the ring, and by its power assumed Solomon's form, at the same time changing that unhappy monarch's appearance to such an extent that his courtiers no longer recognized him, and drove him from his kingdom. However, one of Solomon's ministers was shrewd enough to see through the disguise of the jinn, and proceeded to drive away the evil spirit by reciting certain versions of the law. The jinn fled affrighted, and dropped the ring into the sea. Here it was swallowed by a fish, and in due time this fish was caught by Solomon, who had entered the employ of a fisherman. Once again in possession of his ring, Solomon soon regained his kingdom.

Another wonder-working ring, said to have belonged to the Emperor Charlemagne, was set with a precious stone dropped by a serpent into the sovereign's beaker while he sat at meat.

THE RING OF THE NIBELUNGEN

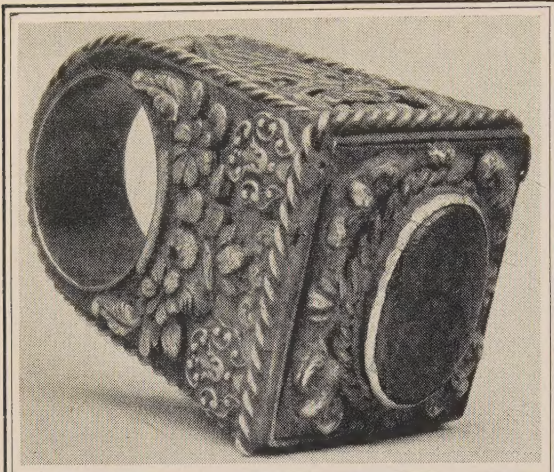
Sweeping down through the centuries for another outstanding illustration, probably the best example of all of the rings of magic powers, is the ring of the Nibelungen, immortalized in the operas of Richard Wagner. Throughout that marvelous story it is always the ring that dominates. With the first theft of the ring from the "Nibelungs" (dwarfs of the underworld,



In the Brera Gallery, Milan

THE MARRIAGE OF THE VIRGIN

Painted on wood by Raphael when a very young man for the Church of San Francesco, in Città di Castello, Italy. The Virgin is attended by five maidens, and St. Joseph by five young men



SEAL RING OF POPE CLEMENT XII (1652-1740)

Photographed from the original in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. The ring is of silver. On one side is engraved a plaque showing St. George and the Dragon; on the other, the arms of the Pope. The seal is probably an effigy of this pontiff

who wrought it out of gold stolen from the Rhine maidens' keeping) grim tragedy begins, and there is no peace upon earth until the evil-inspiring gold circlet is flung back again into the Rhine.

PHARAOH'S RING Since the use of the ring goes back to the mists of history, its origin is naturally somewhat obscure. Signet rings were used in Egypt from a very remote period. We read in the Book of Genesis, "And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and

put a gold chain about his neck." It was very likely from Egypt that rings made their way to the Greeks, and thence across the seas to Italy. In the great stories that are linked with the name of Homer the ring plays its part. Ulysses, of many wanderings, is believed to have worn a ring engraved with a dolphin, out of gratitude to the particular dolphin that rescued his son Telemachus from the dangers of the deep. Helen of Troy, whose love affairs were responsible for the Trojan War, is said to have worn a ring bearing the figure of an enormous fish.

GREEK AND PERSIAN

From the days when the independence of the various states and cities of Greece was being constantly threatened by the hordes of Persia there has come down to us a story of a clever use of a ring made by a man of Thebes who was sent as an envoy to the Persian king. Before being taken into the royal presence this man of Thebes was instructed by the master of ceremonies that he must prostrate himself before the sovereign. Such an act of servility was strongly distasteful to his Greek consciousness, both as a debasement of his individual dignity and as an act of divine homage offered to a mortal. Yet for the sake of his mission he had to be careful that the Persian despot be not stirred to anger.

To escape from the dilemma, the envoy, as he approached the throne, took off his ring and succeeded in dropping it without attracting too much attention; whereupon he stooped and picked it up. The Greek onlookers understood perfectly the meaning of his action, while the Persian believed that he had conformed satisfactorily to the court ceremonial. His little ruse was rewarded by a favorable reception of his requests by the Persian king, who had long been offended by the obstinate refusal of the Greeks to render to him the homage he believed to be his due.

From the glory that was Greece let us pass to the grandeur that was Rome. When the city founded on the banks of the Tiber by Romulus and Remus had grown to be a mighty force in the world, the ring assumed a definite and important place in its social and political life. At first, in the simpler days

THE GRANDEUR THAT WAS ROME

of the republic, most of the rings were of iron. Only a senator sent on an embassy received a gold ring; all other senators being restricted to iron rings. But those were the years when ideas of Spartan sobriety prevailed. Soon senators of noble birth, and, later on, all senators without distinction, enjoyed the right of wearing gold rings. In the third century B. C. the privilege was then extended to the knights, and in the last years of the republic, as well as under the emperors, many other classes of citizens were partakers of the privilege, so that before long even some freedmen and certain of those pursuing the least reputable vocations were permitted the enjoyment of a distinction once jealously guarded.

But at the time when the Punic Wars were being waged to decide whether Rome or Carthage should be the mistress of the ancient world the wearing of gold rings in Rome was a clear indication of social position. In August, 216 B. C., the great Carthaginian commander Hannibal crushingly defeated the Romans at the Battle of Cannæ. After the battle Hannibal ordered that the gold rings be taken from the hands of the dead Romans. The rings thus collected were sent to Carthage, not as valuable spoils of war, but as proof of the great slaughter among the Roman patricians and knights, for at that time none beneath the rank of knights, and only those of highest standing among them, those provided with steeds by the state, had the right to wear gold rings.

Rome, shocked by the news of the disaster at Cannæ, proclaimed it a day of national mourning, on



PORTRAIT OF POPE INNOCENT X, by Velasquez
The pontiff wears a ring with a square stone and setting of traditional design



From a painting by Conrad Faber

A BURGHER OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Wearing a signet ring on the index finger and a ring set with a gem on the fourth finger. The head of what appears to be a staff bears a medallion of St. George and the Dragon

which all gold rings were laid aside as a mark of sorrow, and iron rings were substituted. That was the custom on all days of national mourning—a custom which held after the defeat at Cannæ, and which was observed on the funeral day of Augustus Cæsar, two hundred and thirty years later. To discard the gold ring was also a gesture of humility. A man in danger of punishment for some offense against the state often won pardon by the simple expedient of taking off his gold ring. That was interpreted as meaning that he was sincerely sorry for what he had done. The wearing of the gold ring, because it was a sign of patrician and afterward of free birth, had such a high value in the eyes of the Romans that some freedmen used the subterfuge of wearing a gold ring with a dark coating, so that it

would appear to be of iron. Thus, although they neither had the gratification nor incurred the perils of wearing a symbol confined to the free-born, they had the intimate personal satisfaction of knowing that it was really on the hand. The women, however, were forced to no such devices. Either they were privileged or they took privileges. The wives of simple plebeians who were in good circumstances seem as generally and freely to have worn rings of precious metal as the wives and daughters of senators or knights or other patrician women. Some of the women wore gold on every finger.

THE RING AND OSTENTATION

Ostentation has in all ages been a target for ridicule. In ancient Greece and Rome this showed itself in the wearing of too many rings and rings that were too conspicuous. The Greek humorist Lucian hit at this form of display in "The Cock," in which he made a character relate a dream in which the dreamer thought that a rich man had just died and left him his fortune. Thereupon, in his dream, he saw himself arrayed in splendid raiment and wearing *sixteen* rings on his fingers.

Of the affectations practiced in ring-wearing by some of the newly rich foreigners in Rome the great satirist Juvenal wrote: "When one sees an Egyptian plebeian, not long before a slave in Canopus, carelessly throwing over his shoulder a mantle of Tyrian purple, and seeking to cool his perspiring fingers by wearing summer rings of open-work gold, as he cannot bear the weight of gemmed rings, how can one fail to write it down in satire?"

NAPOLEONIC RINGS

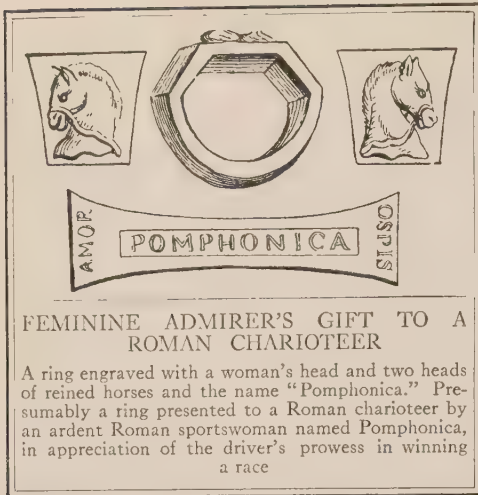
There are various rings linked with Napoleon and his wars. There is, for example, the ring supposed to have been associated with Napoleon's escape from the island of Elba in 1815. Such a ring, said to be one of the six made for distribution among the conspirators who planned the escape, is to be seen to-day in the British Museum. The bezel has a hinged lid, on the inner side of which is engraved in relief the head of Napoleon; on the outer side is an enameled design showing three flowers on stems, a laurel wreath running around the edge. Whether the story of its having belonged to one of the conspirators is true or not, the concealment of the Napoleon head shows that the ring was made for, and worn by, an adherent of the fallen emperor at a time when it would have been dangerous for him to proclaim his loyalty openly.



In the Academy, Venice

THE GONDOLIER PRESENTING THE RING OF ST. MARK TO THE DUKE OF VENICE

A painting by Bordone commemorating a cherished legend of the Venetians. A poor boatman had the good fortune to perform a service for St. Mark, the city's patron saint. At parting, the saint gave the gondolier his ring, and in turn the gondolier passed it on to the Doge of Venice for safe-keeping among the city's treasures

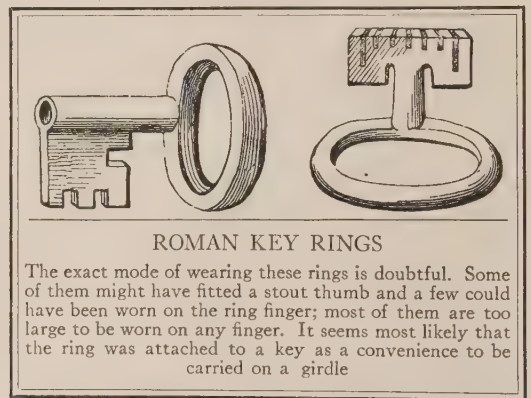


enamel coffin was set; on pressing a spring at the side of the ring a section of the circle sprang up and revealed a tiny figure of Napoleon in enamel.

WEDDING RINGS

Whence came the wedding ring? There is an interesting story in that alone. In earlier times there were no special wedding rings, the betrothal and the wedding ring being one and the same. But it was always a pledge of love and a symbol of nuptial union. With the Romans a signet was set in the betrothal ring to signify that the wife was to have the

But long before the escape, from the day of the emperor's first abdication, rings symbolizing similar hopes were being worn in France. The followers of Napoleon and his luminous star clung to the hope that he would speedily return to reestablish his rule. In order to aid in keeping this hope alive, a number of rings were made which could be worn with impunity, but which could also serve when desired as proofs of the wearer's attachment to the Napoleonic cause. One of these is described as a gold ring on which a minute gold and



right of sealing up the household goods, and occasionally a small key formed part of the ring, with a similar significance. We have a testimony to this view in the words of the wedding ceremony: "With all my worldly goods I thee endow."

The custom of bestowing a ring upon the betrothed has been traced back in Rome to the second century B. C. Plain iron rings were first used for this purpose, and they were still favored even when the wearing of gold rings had become general among certain classes of Roman citizens. However, in the course of the second century of the



In the Church of St. Catherine, Venice

MARRIAGE OF ST. CATHERINE TO THE CHURCH

An interpretation of the mystic ceremony by the celebrated Italian painter Paolo Veronese. More than thirty of the old masters chose this episode as a subject. Nearly all of them showed the martyr-saint receiving a wedding ring from the infant Christ

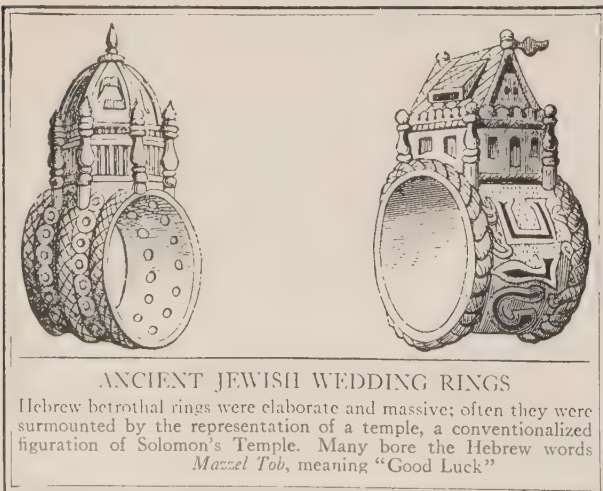
Christian era, and perhaps earlier, gold rings came into use in the ceremony of betrothal. Pliny's assertion that the bride wore an unset iron ring has been interpreted to mean no more than that, in the case of those entitled to wear gold rings, the bridegroom, after giving the bride a gold ring, later bestowed upon her one of iron for wear within doors.

To-day we naturally think of the wedding ring only in connection with the third finger, omitting the thumb in counting, of the woman's left hand. It was not always worn there. During the reign of George I of England (1714-1727) it was not unusual for the bride to wear the wedding ring on the *thumb*, although it had been placed on the third finger at the marriage ceremony. Possibly this custom may have been due to the fact that particularly large wedding rings were favored by fashion at that time. Also in India to-day, as in Europe two centuries ago, the wedding ring is worn on the thumb. But it is not placed there for life; usually only during the days actually devoted to the marriage ceremonies; at most for six months or a year after the marriage. Eventually it is melted down, the precious metal being then worked over again into some other kind of ornament.

RINGS AND FINGERS

Two origins are ascribed for the selection of the third finger of the left hand as the one on which to wear the wedding ring. The Romans had the idea that a special nerve or vein ran directly from that finger to the heart. Macrobius, the Latin grammarian who was governor of Spain from 399 to 400 A. D., wrote in the "Saturnalia": "Because of this nerve, the newly betrothed places a ring on this finger of his spouse, as though it were a representation of his heart." Macrobius said that he had had his information from an Egyptian priest. Of a religious nature was the other ascribed origin of the practice. In the church service it was usual for the Christian priest to touch successively three fingers with the ring while saying "In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and then to place the ring on the last finger touched.

The new world in which we are living has brought some odd aspects to the wearing of this ring that symbolizes the union of the man and the woman. Advocates of "woman's rights" have urged the interchange of rings both at engagements and marriages as an acknowledgment of the perfect equality of the relation. A few years ago a proposition was agitated in London that men should be forced to wear





THE MARRIAGE BY PROXY OF HENRY IV OF FRANCE AND MARIA DE' MEDICI
One of many paintings by Peter Paul Rubens representing scenes in the life of Henry of Navarre

wedding rings. Public attention was called to this question by newspaper reports to the effect that a young woman testified that she had innocently encouraged the attentions of a married man, because she had no means of knowing that he was married. The custom of the husband wearing a wedding ring as well as the wife has long been the rule in Germany, as well as in many other European countries.

Also "divorce rings" have been suggested and at times actually worn. A novel idea in "divorce rings" was recently reported from Chicago, where a fashionable divorcée had her wedding ring made smaller so that she could wear it on the little finger of her left hand as a divorce ring. A Pennsylvania court has been called upon to decide whether the gift of an engagement ring bestowed by a man just previous to a declaration of bankruptcy should be looked upon as a transfer of assets to the prejudice of the creditors. The fact that in this case the fair recipient of the ring was a jeweler's daughter might be thought to render likely that this particular engagement ring was of a



substantial intrinsic value. The court reserved its decision.

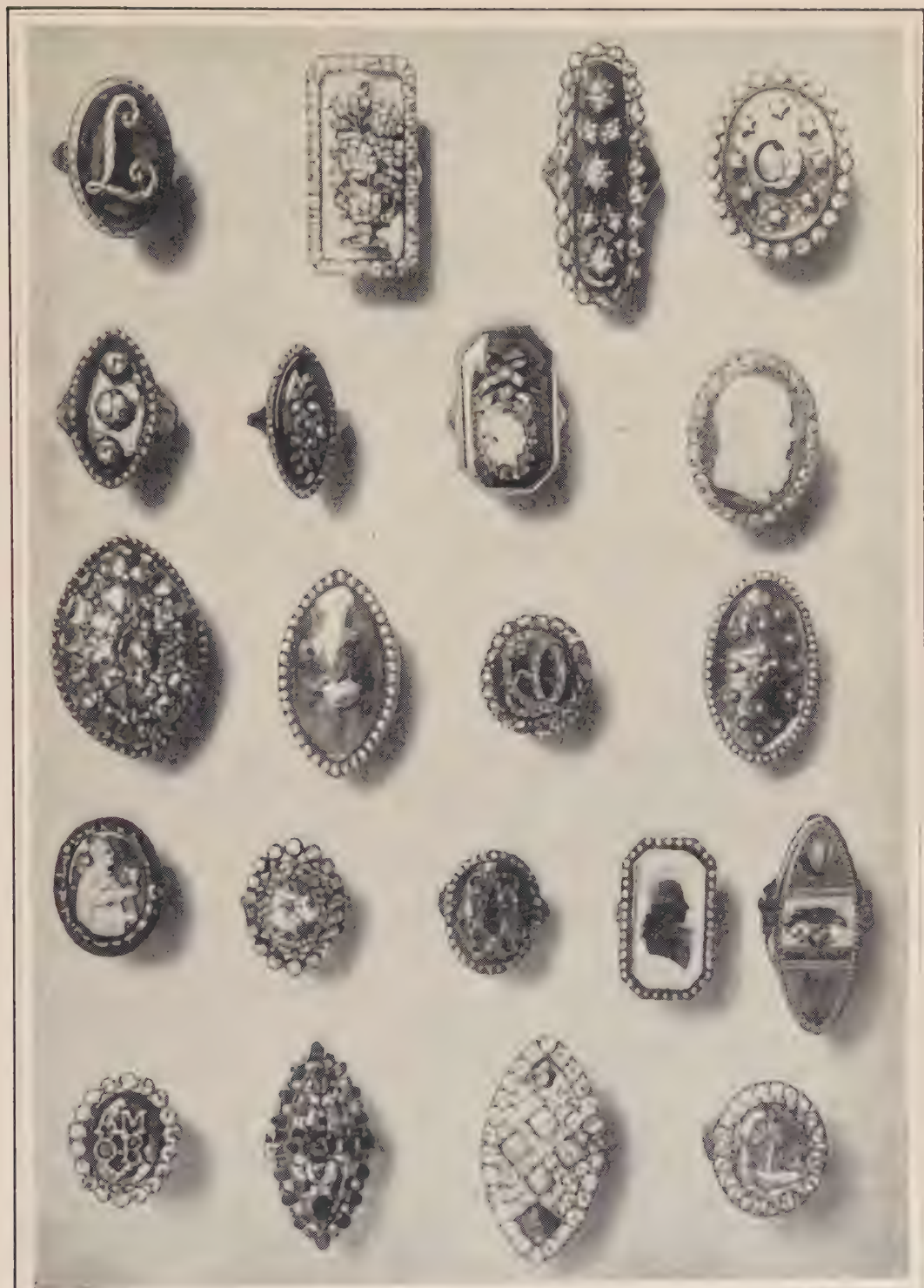
The modern idea has also introduced latitude and consequent originality in the inscription of engagement rings. Quoting at random we find: "Our engagement," "To my Chiquita, from Bill" (in Spanish), "Perfect love casteth out fear," "Stick to me, darling," "Firm and true," "Bessie, sweet sixteen," "For my sake wear this, it is a manacle of love," "He that taketh a wife hath a good thing," and, capping in oddity all the others, the bridegroom's simple motto "Carrie suits."

At present a delicate platinum wedding ring engraved with flowers such as orange flowers or with designs of ivy or oak is favored. Many platinum rings are of twin bands for the entire

circlet. Or there may be a circlet of engraved diamonds without any metal below, the stones being set in grooves and engraved on the sides.

RINGS OF DEATH In appeal to the imagination second only to the ring carrying magic powers is what may be called the "ring of death," or the sinister ring. Throughout history it has played its dramatic or evil part. At first it was designed as a means of quick and easy escape from a terrible fate, the horrors of the torture chamber, or the disgrace of humiliating and painful slavery to a hated foe. The Carthaginian, Hannibal, turned to the poison contained in his ring when he was on the point of being given up to his enemies the Romans. Of the ring which gave the great commander swift release Juvenal wrote: "That ring, the avenger of those who fell at Cannæ and of so much blood that had been shed." The Athenian orator Demosthenes is said to have carried a similar ring.

Time brought about the invention of a new kind of ring of death, the poison ring designed for the purpose of premeditated murder. The poison rings of the Borgias, that notorious Italian family of the Middle Ages, are famous in history. Some of them still exist, one bearing the date 1503 and the motto of Cesare Borgia in old French. Beneath the bezel of this ring there is a sliding panel, and when this is displaced there appears a small space where the poison was kept. Such rings simply afforded a ready supply of poison at need, but another type constituted a death-dealing weapon. The bezel was wrought into the shape of a lion, and the hollow claws of the animal admitted the passage of a subtle poison which was pressed out of the cavity through the lion's claws, and it is conjectured that the death wound could have been inflicted by turning the bezel of the ring inward, so that a hearty grasp would produce a slight puncture in the enemy's hand.



SUGGESTIVE OF SATINS AND RUFFLES AND POWDERED WIGS

Baubles that might have adorned the delicate fingers of court ladies in the days of the Versailles court—seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Settings like these have long been a specialty of French jewelers



PORTRAIT OF A GENTLEMAN, By Bartolommeo Veneto
 Painted at a time when Italian men of fashion affected the wear-
 ing of rings on the index and little fingers

There is in existence a poison ring of Venetian workmanship that has a richly engraved hoop, the setting consisting of a pointed diamond, on either side of which are two cabochon-cut rubies. On touching a spring at the side of the bezel holding the diamond, the upper half, in which the stone is set, springs open, revealing a space beneath, in which a small quantity of poison could be concealed, enough in the case of the more active poisons to furnish a deadly dose, either for an enemy, or for the wearer of the ring himself in case of need.

One of the thousand and one little curious and much-discussed points of history is whether the man who ruled—or, rather, who misruled—England as George IV actually married Mrs. Fitzherbert

when he was prince regent. There were those who claimed to have been present at the marriage ceremony. In all events, the king is said to have had

THE RING AND THE REGENT two rings made, each provided with a secret spring, which, on being pressed, opened a panel and revealed the king's portrait and that of Mrs. Fitzherbert, respectively. The ring containing the king's portrait was bestowed by him upon his favorite, and that with her portrait was kept by him, and, before his death, entrusted to the Duke of Wellington, the duke promising solemnly that he would place it upon his dead master's breast when his remains were in the coffin.

Thirteen years ago another ring that played a part in English history was placed on sale in Christie's auction-rooms in London, and after spirited bidding was adjudged for \$17,500. That was the ring given by Queen Elizabeth to the Earl of Essex as a love token.

When that nobleman was high in the queen's favor she bestowed upon him a gold ring set with a sardonyx cut with her portrait; giving him, at the same time, a solemn promise that whatever charges might be brought

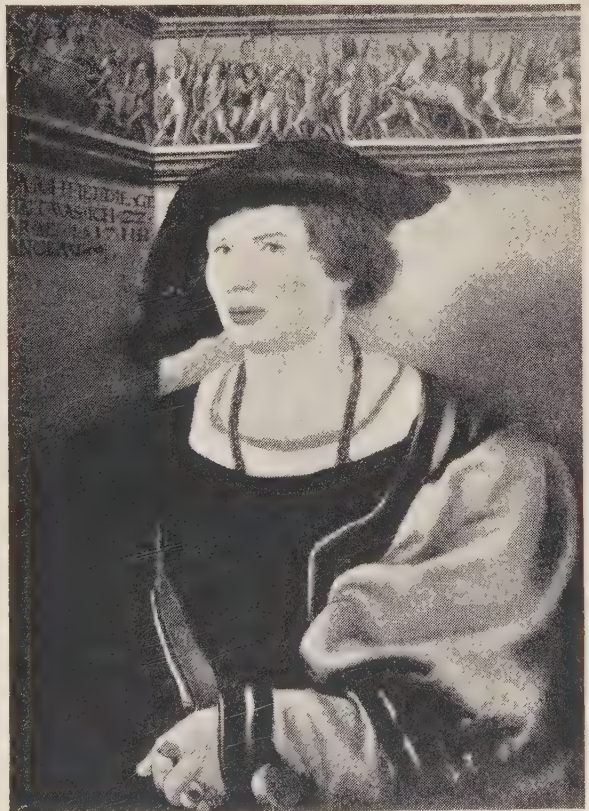
THE ROMANCE OF RINGS

against him, she would accord him her pardon if he sent her this ring.

Some years later Essex, who had in the meanwhile lost the queen's favor, was impeached for high treason and sentenced to be put to death. In this extremity he endeavored to find some means to transmit to the queen the ring she had given him. Fearing to trust his keepers with the execution of the task, Essex found no better way than to throw the ring to a boy who was passing the prison, directing him to give it to Lady Scrope, Lady Nottingham's sister. Unfortunately for Essex, the boy gave the ring by mistake to Lady Nottingham, whose husband was one of Essex's bitterest enemies, so that the token never reached the queen. Convinced that her former favorite was too proud and obstinate to ask her mercy, Elizabeth left him to his fate.

Years afterward, when Lady Nottingham was on her deathbed, she asked for the queen and confessed to her that she had failed to deliver the ring sent to her by Essex. This confession aroused the queen's wrath to such an extent that she burst forth in violent reproaches and rushed from the room exclaiming: "God may forgive you; I never shall!" The proud heart of the Virgin Queen was broken by the revelation, and, weighed down by remorse for the death of Essex, she expired a few weeks later.

Another victim of Elizabeth's stern rule, the ill-fated Mary, Queen of Scots, sent just before her execution a memorial ring to her faithful follower and kinsman, Lord John Hamilton, with an affectionate message and her last farewell. The ring, set with a sapphire, was handed down through generations in the Hamilton family. On the night before the execution Mary asked her apothecary if he could safely convey two diamonds to those for whom they were intended. The apothecary said that he would conceal them in a drug. One of the diamonds was for Mendoza, for a long time Spanish ambassador at Queen Eliza-



In the Metropolitan Museum, New York

PORTRAIT OF BENEDIKT VON HERTENSTEIN
By Hans Holbein

This German nobleman of the sixteenth century is shown wearing several rings on one hand



beth's court, and the other, the larger one, for Philip II of Spain. This was to be received as "a sign that she was dying for the truth, and was also meant to bespeak his care for her friends and servants."

Long before Mary sought refuge in England from her rebellious Scotch subjects she is said to have received from Elizabeth one of the type of twin rings, known as "gimmel rings"; this was formed of two diamonds joined together to form a heart. Should Mary be in trouble, she was to send her half to Elizabeth with an appeal for her help. However, when the time came, the appeal was vainly made.

Mary went to execution at Fotheringay Castle, February 8, 1587. A little more than two months later, on April 15, 1587, King Philip had a requiem sung in her memory. Then he gave the abbot a ring set with the diamond which the queen had sent him, with the injunction that it should be placed among the sacred relics and preserved as "a symbol of the purity and the firm faith of this saintly queen."

MISS ROOSEVELT AND THE RINGS

To turn to our own times. Some years ago Mr. Taft, then Secretary of State, accompanied by a number of prominent Americans, visited the Sulu Islands. Mrs. Nicholas Longworth, then Miss Alice Roosevelt, was one of the party, and the Sultan of Sulu, Jamalul Kiram II, expressed great desire to be introduced to her. The favor was readily accorded, and on the day set for the interview the sultan and several Sulu dattos, or chiefs, duly presented themselves. One of the dattos was a mortal enemy of the sultan, but naturally on this occasion all personal feuds were forgotten for the time being. After the sultan had been presented to Miss Roosevelt came the turn of the rebellious datto, who approached the young American girl, greeted her, and presented to her a native pearl of great beauty, which was graciously accepted.

This was not at all to the liking of the Sultan of Sulu. He had forgotten to provide himself with a suitable gift, and now his mortal enemy was basking in the sunshine of her favor, while he himself, the lord paramount, was neglected. Suddenly his eye fell upon a ring set with a magnificent pearl which he wore on his left hand. He immediately took off this ring, and, again approaching Miss Roosevelt, gave it to her. As the sultan's pearl far exceeded in beauty and value that given by the datto, the former's dignity was cleared of all reproach and the situation was saved. A curious sequel to this incident was the circulation of a report that was spread far and wide through the newspapers to the effect





THE FINE ART OF RING MAKING—DESIGNS BOTH CURIOUS AND BEAUTIFUL

Portraits, mosaics, marine pictures, memorial urns, miniature watches, all have been used by Continental designers. Each ring is a study and a delight; each seems to hint of a story

that the Sultan of Sulu had made an offer of marriage to Miss Roosevelt.

Thus, yesterday and to-day and to-morrow, from the earliest times to our own practical age, the ring is linked with history's page. Indeed, at times it is the only actual physical connection that we have with the mighty past. Maximinus, the giant Thracian peasant who for a brief span ruled the Roman Empire, is to-day only a name. Yet in Paris there is a ring believed to have been made in his reign, and which perhaps adorned his finger. Indeed, he is said to have used his wife's bracelet as a thumb ring. Another ring in existence, a ring set with a ruby, is thought to have belonged to the French king and crusader known as "Saint Louis." On March 10, 1810, a ring with the initials W. S. was found at Stratford-on-Avon. By many it is believed to have been the ring of the immortal Shakespeare. Who knows? Perhaps it may have been on his hand when he penned "Hamlet." Of the several rings in existence associated with George Washington there is no doubt. We are as sure of them as we are of the ring of the late President Wilson, on which, characteristically, he had his name engraved in stenographic symbols.

RING-MAKING IN THE TRENCHES OF YESTERDAY

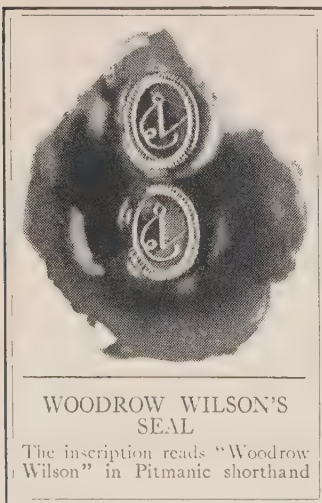
Throughout history the ring has been bound up with the record of human strife. The World War supplied incidents of this. A diversion of the French soldiers in the trenches was the fashioning of rings out of aluminum fuses taken from the bombs which the German guns rained so liberally upon them. At the beginning, the disks were first worked with scissors to make rude rings for men's big fingers. Later, the well-furnished tool box of the machine-gun squad was called into requisition. This early primitive type was soon abandoned, and, in order to make rings of the proper dimensions, the metal from the German shells was fused and run into ingots; the crucible was frequently one of the new iron helmets, which was set on a wood fire that was kept going by a bellows improvised from a bayonet sheath. So eagerly did some of the soldiers pursue this occupation

that when their aluminum threatened to give out they would look impatiently in the direction of the hidden batteries of the enemy in the hope that an early bombardment would bring them a fresh supply of the metal.

RINGS OF TO-DAY

Since 1900 there has been an entire change in the mounting and designing of many rings.

The golden wedding ring has been almost entirely replaced by the plain platinum ring, and this by a platinum ring engraved with orange blossoms, ivy, oak, and other emblems; and this again has largely been replaced by a narrow band of diamonds, either round, emerald-cut, or square-cut brilliant.





PORTRAIT OF ROBERT CHESEMAN, FALCONER TO HENRY VIII
Painted by Holbein, who was a master designer of jewelry and equally skilful in painting it

Diamonds, which were formerly set in six or eight points, are now set in tiny boxes and rarely alone, the settings being encrusted with diamonds of various sizes running to the most minute, weighing as low as 100 to 400 to the carat, or 15,000 to 60,000 to the ounce.

The cutting of minute diamonds has never been so successfully carried out as at present, when stones weighing from 100 to the carat to 400 to the carat are beautifully cut and polished. In addition to the round-cut brilliant, emerald-cut or square-cut diamonds are also used. If the stone in the ring is an emerald, ruby, or sapphire, frequently the setting is very plain, except the sides of the ring, where the long, narrow bagette-cut diamonds are used. Frequently four of these are set around the square stone and two in the shank, the two in the shank frequently terminating at the top of the central stone. Then again, diamonds are cut in the form of ellipses,



ONE OF SEVERAL PORTRAITS OF THE DUTCH SCHOLAR ERASMUS BY HOLBEIN
Showing that even an ascetic theologian and philosopher of the fifteenth century adorned his fingers with rings

“marquise” or “navette” as they are termed, and occasionally in a pear shape.

The princess, cluster, and large dinner rings have been replaced by rings containing large single stones; and, in the place of several rings worn on the finger, one important stone is worn. With the exception of the cheaper rings, the settings are entirely platinum, and tiny brilliants decorate the settings.

Seal rings are frequently of gold and platinum, an inset of platinum in the gold for the seal; or, when stones are worn, they are occasionally fine sapphires, emeralds, fine jade, tourmaline, and other colored stones, replacing the onyx, carnelian, sard, intaglio, and cameo of former days.

KING HENRY AND HIS WIVES

ILLUSTRATED WITH REPRODUCTIONS FROM PAINTINGS
AND DRAWINGS BY HANS HOLBEIN AND OTHERS



PORTRAIT OF HENRY VIII, BY HANS HOLBEIN

THE Holbeins were for three generations prominent in the art affairs of the old German town of Augsburg, near Nuremburg. Hans Holbein the Younger, born near the end of the fifteenth century, began painting signs when he was a boy, and later illustrated books, among them a humorous work by Erasmus, the Dutch scholar. By the time he was twenty-five he was launched on a busy career, decorating houses, designing jewelry, engraving, painting pictures. With a letter from Erasmus, he went to England and presented himself to Sir Thomas More, Chancellor of King Henry VIII. This introduction eventually opened the way to the installation of the foreign artist as court painter, with living quarters in the palace at Whitehall. Of one commission Holbein was always sure. He had a standing order to paint the portraits of the ladies that won the king's favor, and, with the exception of Catharine Parr, all the queens of Henry VIII sat to him. Holbein's portraits—strong, powerfully lighted transcriptions of human nature—give us a picture of his world, the great world of kings, noblemen, scholars, and merchants. In 1543 he died of the plague in London.

KING HENRY AND HIS WIVES



©H. M. the King. Windsor Collection

CATHARINE HOWARD
(1520-1542)

THE STORY OF OFT-MARRIED KING HENRY THE EIGHTH OF ENGLAND

BY WILLIS STEELL

CATHARINE OF ARAGON,
MARRIED JUNE 11, 1509

ANNE BOLEYN,
MARRIED JANUARY 25, 1533

JANE SEYMOUR,
MARRIED MAY 20, 1536

ANNE OF CLEVES,
MARRIED JANUARY 6, 1540

CATHARINE HOWARD,
MARRIED JULY 28, 1540

CATHARINE PARR,
MARRIED JULY 12, 1543



©H. M. the King. Windsor Collection

ANNE BOLEYN
(1507-1536)

Many readers of history are so fascinated by the story of King Henry's domestic adventures that they stop there and fail to give him his just dues. It is human nature to pick out the weaknesses of great men, including kings; and in the case of Henry, owing to his numerous marriages, the ordinary way is to personify in him the Blue-beard myth.

How do we know what a man is? Not entirely by what he does and says, but by many little evidences: what his neighbors say of him, his conduct toward his family, his habits and taste in matters of living.

It is the same with a king. Addresses from the throne, treaties made, policies urged or changed, form only part of the testimony. Public opinion is influenced more by ordinary things—the way he treated his wife and children, what the ladies and gentlemen of the court thought of him, how the merchants and the common people spoke of him—these indeed fix his character.

And the common people, merchants, provenders, wine dealers, tailors, admirals, captains, sailors before the mast, admired and liked "bluff King Hal."

And the court people—except, of course, those whose heads he chopped off—spoke and wrote of him admiringly. These persons have left numerous writings, which agree in one point: that to *all* his wives Henry was

uniformly kind, loyal, and generous, harsh in speech once only to Anne Boleyn, the only woman he ever loved—and in her confession of guilt it must be admitted that Anne gave him cause. No, I am mistaken—once before this tragic occasion Henry rebuked Anne. It was on January 7, 1536, when word came that his divorced wife, Catharine of Aragon, was dead, and the new, blond wife refused to go into mourning.

Having mentioned Catharine, let me add that she who died as she had lived, haughty, resolute, and unbending, preserved in her loneliness a deep affection for the king. Well nigh with her last breath she summoned strength to write that she had always loved him and would die loving him.

The England of Henry's time (1491-1547), while important enough politically to be considered a valuable ally of Spain, was not rated high economically. Scotland was an independent kingdom, Wales aspired to be, and Ireland had to be brought again into subjection by Henry's soldiers. England had no colonies and no dependencies, no merchant marine deserving of the name, and no navy. To establish the last, Henry labored from the beginning, demanding ships from Parliaments that he kept in session or dismissed, according as they gave or refused money for the development of sea power, until the year 1545 marked the birth of the



In the Louvre

From a painting by Hans Holbein

ANNE OF CLEVES (1515–1557)

English naval power. It was an unparalleled accomplishment that only despotism could attain, and Henry was a despot, but a despot who wrought under the forms of law.

Now, as to the king's first marriage and the politics that compelled it. Henry, as second son, was destined for the church. He took no interest in politics, and before he reached the age of eighteen he was notable

for his theological accomplishments, excelling too as a linguist, a musician, and an athlete, early brought by his tutor, the poet Shelton, under the influence of the Renaissance. In 1502 his brother Arthur died, and seven years later, by the death of his father, Henry VII, he became king. For reasons of state, and in spite of the protest he felt compelled to register against the union,

and the doubts of its validity expressed by Archbishop Warham and Pope Julian II, Henry was betrothed and married to his brother's widow, Catharine, who was many years his senior.

It is only fair to remember these facts. The marriage was compelled by the King of Spain, Catharine's father, who meant to retain his influence over Henry's council.

With the awakening of ambition in the English king, circumstances began to shape badly for Catharine. Her spouse might have overcome his distaste for her but for two things of varying importance: he had seen, admired, and flirted with a beautiful blond lady in waiting, Anne Boleyn, niece of the Duke of Norfolk. This young person, who had been brought up in France, had all the arts of seduction and used them. She thirsted for the throne, and for seven years kept Henry off and on, until he promised marriage. A score of times he declared that he meant to seek a divorce from the papal court, and a score of times he hesitated and didn't. Then Anne dissolved her pretty blue eyes in tears.

A reason more powerful than his passion decided Henry. His wife had failed to present to the country a male heir. Powerful statesmen openly urged the king in his duty for the succession.

Henry was no longer "the untutored boy." He was thirty-four, a master in politics, brooking no superior, and he adopted a critical attitude toward the policies of Cardinal Wolsey. As the crafty cardinal saw his favor wane he sought by every means to restore it; he presented the king with his noble palace Hampton Court, he called an ecclesiastical court to weigh Henry's right to a divorce—but all in vain, and, when a

decree was denied, Wolsey fell, and under Henry's able hand grew the triumph of the anti-ecclesiastical party in England.

The country loved this democratic king who wanted to "run" his own church, and who, finding the old nobility were no match for him in intelligence, created a new nobility out of the middle classes.



CATHARINE PARR (1512-1548)

Now Catharine is divorced and a marriage between Henry and Anne Boleyn is being arranged secretly. By now we ought to have a pretty good idea of what kind of king Henry was. He worked for the good of the state because he thought his interests were those of the nation. He committed no illegal act, but was able to use legal ways and means to an extraordinary degree in furthering his own personal ends. Henry was the emblem, the focus, the bond of national unity, and, to preserve that unity which all kinds of men felt was their protection, his subjects were willing to put up with vagaries which now would seem intolerable.

On a St. Paul's day the wedding of Henry and Anne took place.

The ceremony was private; nobody knows the scene of it or who attended. Somehow the pair were married. The coronation, which occurred the following May, was open and splendid, a public spectacle where the streets of London were decked in cloth of gold and tissue, velvet and tapestry. Crowds thronged them, especially thick near the Tower, where the procession started.

Out of the portals came a white chariot drawn by two palfreys sheeted in white damask. Over it hung a golden canopy fringed with silver bells. In the chariot sat Anne, Queen of England at last. Shouts and acclamations pronounced her the fairest of England's daughters.

Catharine, divorced queen, lived several



From a painting by Hans Holbein

JANE SEYMOUR (1510-1537)

years after her failure to hold Henry, witnessing her rival's triumph. She died in January, 1536. Had she lived but one month longer, she would have seen the beginning of the end of Anne's triumph, for, in the February of that year, Anne gave birth to a dead boy baby.

From now on the descent of this second wife was rapid. After three short years

Anne was again in the Tower, this time a prisoner, accused of adultery. Was she guilty? Court gossip convicted her many times over. Her uncle, Duke of Norfolk, sat among her judges and pronounced her guilty. She did not deny her guilt on the scaffold.

Henry said he was inconsolable, and perhaps he felt so. The only living issue of the marriage was a girl, the future Queen Eliza-

beth. Hope of a male heir could be based only on a third nuptial, and this was hastily prepared. Henry began making secret and hasty visits to the village of Shepparton, situated not far from London on the Thames, the home of Sir Edward Seymour and his sister Jane. To court Jane Seymour was the object of the king. Without preparation or pomp of ceremony he married her.

Among Henry's wives Jane Seymour stands out distinguished by a stainless name, untarnished by a breath of reproach. By her good understanding, her modest demeanor, and gentle spirit she won the king's esteem. In his will Henry ordered that his body be laid by her side in death. She died at Hampton Court in 1537, after giving birth to a boy, afterward Edward VI.

The country having been provided with an heir to the throne, Henry expressed the wish to be spared further marriage, but he became interested in Anne of Cleves, daughter of the Duke of Cleves. The portrait painters of the day had flattered the lady so outrageously that Henry thought he was going to marry a beauty.

What a shock he received when Anne, having been married by proxy, came to England! She could speak only German and was of a thick and dark complexion, coarse features, and a large and corpulent figure! Such a wife for a kingly connoisseur of feminine beauty!

Henry was stunned when he saw her first and could not utter a word of greeting. In his hurry to get out of sight of her he even forgot to make her the gift he had brought. He

refused to consummate the marriage. Anne received her dismissal calmly, and signed a written consent to a divorce, a palace or two being given to her for consolation.

"Unfortunate man that I am," cried Henry, "pursued by relentless fate in my marriages!" And, in truth, he might well have complained. He married Catharine Howard, and in little more than a year the

crime of adultery was charged and proved against her. She admitted her guilt, after the confession of her two accomplices. No wonder the king was overwhelmed and declared that a dreadful spirit pursued his married life, tainting it with infamy.

Yet again Henry ventured into matrimony, this time with a widow also named Catharine. This relict of Lord Latimer, born Catharine Parr, was selected not in the interest of the realm but by Henry's own personal judgment, and in this union he at last found a restful and congenial companionship.

The realm, like

its ruler, welcomed the new queen, and the common people muttered: "Well, well, Hal's safe in port at last!" Not that the people had grumbled because of his marrying habit. His subjects watched his many domestic adventures with interest, and only feared lest they should prove uniformly unfruitful.

Other times, other manners! Henry lived in a rude age, and his rule took its temper from the age. His was an elastic conscience, always obedient to his desires. He cared little for principle, but he cared much for the prosperity of England—and he set his nation on a road of progress that has continued through the succeeding centuries.



CATHARINE OF ARAGON (1485-1536)

A PAINTER OF ROYALTY

BY WILLIAM STARKWEATHER

"We are all going to Heaven, and Van Dyck is of the company," Gainsborough, dying of cancer in 1788, murmured these words to his rival, Sir Joshua Reynolds, with whom an eleventh-hour reconciliation had been effected. The art of Van Dyck had deeply influenced the thought and work of Gainsborough: the influence is revealed in many of the English artist's pictures, particularly in the celebrated "Blue Boy," where young Jonathan Buttall is shown dressed not in clothes of his epoch but in a blue satin suit of Van Dyck's period and in a pose that recalls Van Dyck's manner.

Van Dyck's rich art not only influenced Gainsborough but has powerfully affected portrait painting to our day. Generations of painters since his time have imitated his ways of posing sitters, have reduced to formulas his effects of elegance and grand manner, have copied those suave methods which he not only used to perfection but illumined with the fire of genius.

It is as a painter of aristocracy, of great nobles, of royalty, that one thinks of Van Dyck. He lived at a period when monarchy as an absolute power had reached its height. In France, Richelieu, at the court of Louis XIII, was working successfully to make the power of the Crown supreme; in England, Charles I, during the decade before the year of Van Dyck's death, ruled without Parliament, a law unto himself; the storms gathering about the English throne had only begun to break when Van Dyck died. To the celebration of the pomps and glories of the great figures of the day Van Dyck lent his magic brushes; his own character and the supple and adaptable nature of his talents

made him a courtier in paint. His portraits are not only great works of art but form a sumptuous pageant of notable and splendidly decorative figures of his time.

Born in Antwerp, in 1599, Van Dyck at the age of ten was apprenticed to the painter Van Balen. When nine-

teen he was admitted to the painters' guild of Antwerp, an unusual honor for so young a man. At

about this period he became an assistant

to Rubens. Besides assisting Rubens,

Van Dyck executed a number of religious pictures influ-

enced by his master's manner

but falling short of Rubens' vigor

of conception and execution. A

number of portraits dating from the

same period show what skilful crafts-

manship Van Dyck had attained when only twenty-

one. He was already well known. An agent of

the great English art patron of that day, Thomas, Earl

of Arundel, wrote: "Van

Dyck is always with Signor Rubens, and his works are beginning to be scarcely less esteemed than those of the master."

After a brief trip to England, Van Dyck, mounted on a horse which Rubens had given him at parting, set out for Italy. He visited Genoa, Rome, Florence, Venice, Turin, and Palermo. He executed several commissions at Rome, but his stay was not pleasant. His elegant clothes and manners made him unpopular with the jolly, bohemian crowd of Dutch and Flemish painters there resident. They nicknamed him the "painter cavalier" and made him so uncomfortable that he soon returned to Genoa, where he worked for nearly four years.

At Genoa, Van Dyck was loaded with commissions from the great patrician families. He produced a series of portraits of the



In the Louvre

SELF-PORTRAIT OF VAN DYCK

Genoese nobility which rank among the finest in the world. During his Italian journey Van Dyck sketched freely from the great Italian masters. Always facile and impressionable, learning easily, his art was greatly influenced by Titian. He went to Italy a typical Flemish painter, expert in the swift, fluid, transparent style of Rubens. To these qualities he added the dignity, the serenity, the large decorative spacing and pattern of Titian. When still in his twenties he departed for Flanders, leaving behind him work that in quantity and quality would forever sustain a great reputation, he was in style more nearly an Italian than a Flemish painter.

By 1628 Van Dyck was again established in Antwerp. He made a will declaring himself a "painter, bachelor, and in good health." Certainly only with good health could he have put through the multitude of works of art executed during his second Flemish period, which lasted some

six years. He was created court painter to the Regent of the Netherlands, Isabella of Austria. Maria de' Medici, the exiled Queen of France, and her son Gaston, Duc d'Orléans, visited Van Dyck at his house and sat for several portraits, as did numbers of the nobility. He finished in rapid succession many large religious pictures and altarpieces that to-day for the most part adorn Belgian churches, and withal found time to make a set of portrait etchings which rank with the best works of their kind to be found. These brilliant and fruitful years gave Van Dyck wide celebrity.

Long efforts to persuade Van Dyck to go to England and enter the service of Charles I resulted at last in his arrival in London in 1632. The king assigned him suitable summer and winter residences, where Van Dyck lived in the style of a rich noble rather than a

professional painter. He was appointed Principal Painter in Ordinary to Their Majesties and was knighted a few months after arrival. Now began Van Dyck's last years of feverish activity in England. The king, the queen, and their children sat to him for their portraits again and again. Four months after his arrival he had completed nine large canvases, including the family group of Charles, his consort, and their two children, now at Windsor. He painted at least six-

teen important portraits of Charles, some thirteen of Henrietta Maria, and numerous portraits of their children. Many of these portraits, such as the "Charles I" at the Louvre, are among the world's greatest art treasures. Charles and his queen were frequent visitors to the artist's house at Blackfriars. They went by barge on the Thames. Existing accounts show that in 1635 the king had a new causeway and stair built for "the King's Majesty to land to goe to Sr



PORTRAIT OF COUNTESS OF CHESTERFIELD

Anthony Vandikes house there to see his Paintings." The royal example in ordering Van Dyck portraits was followed by the great English nobility. It is estimated that over three hundred of the artist's pictures exist to-day in English collections.

Under the pressure of such a flood of commissions Van Dyck, toward the close of his life, worked too fast and too much, and relied too greatly upon the help of assistants. After 1635 his studio degenerated into something of a portrait manufactory. His method tended finally toward mannerisms and tricks of the trade; he turned everyone into a fine lady or grand gentleman; he repeated again and again the same poses, with the arm akimbo, the foot on the step, the same smile, the same expression of weary distinction, the same sexless hands with elongated, tapering fingers, and the famil-

lar background of colonnade and curtain.

We get some amusing glimpses of Van Dyck as a portrait painter in certain letters written by the Countess of Sussex, whom he painted in 1639, quoted by Cust. She is concerned about her costume: "Put Sr Vandicke in remembrance to do my pictuer well; I have seen sables with the claws of them set with dimons—if this that i am pictuerde in where don so i thinke it would do very well in the pictuer. If Sr Vandike thinke it would do well i pray desier him to do all the claws so." Later she writes: "I am glad you have made Sr Vandike mind my dress," In her next letter: "I am glade you have prefaled with Sr Vandike to make my pictuer lener, for truly it was too fat; if he made it farer it would be for my credit—i see you will make him trim it, for my advantage every way." She doubts the result of the trimming: "I am glade you have got hom

my pictuer but i doubt he hath nether made it lener nor farer, but too rich in jhuels i am suer, but it tis no great mater for another age to thinke me richer then i was." After seeing the completed work her judgment is: "the pictuer is very ill favourede, makes me quite out of love with myselfe, the face is so bige and so fat that it pleses me not att all, it lookes lyke one of the windes poffinge—but truly I thinke it is like the originale.* If ever i come to London before Sr Vandicke go i will get him to mend my pictuer, for tho' i bee ill favourede i think that makes me wors then i am."

Van Dyck was extravagant; he practically kept open house. His life had always been one of license. Scandal has linked his name with half a dozen of the women he painted. Despite incessant work, he was frequently short of money. His payments from the Crown were often delayed. A detailed bill



In Windsor Castle

STUDY OF THE HEAD OF CHARLES I IN THREE POSITIONS

Made expressly to be sent to Bernini, the Italian sculptor, in order that he might model a bust of the king

*The lady probably means the "original" by Van Dyck; the portrait she received no doubt being a copy.



In the Dresden Gallery

PORTRAIT OF CHARLES I, KING OF ENGLAND

exists of work executed for the king, in which the items have been greatly cut down, apparently by Charles himself. The portrait of Charles now in the Louvre is reduced from £200 to £100. It would probably fetch a million dollars if sold to-day. During the last years of Van Dyck's life he is reported to have joined the eccentric Sir Kenelm Digby in a search for the secret of making gold. He

may have dabbled in alchemy—it was then fashionable—but it is doubtful if he did so, as has been asserted, in order to relieve a desperate financial situation; it is known that at his death he left a considerable estate. About 1640 the king, fearing the effects on Van Dyck's health of his disordered life, arranged a marriage for him with Mary Ruthven, a noblewoman without fortune.



In the Dresden Gallery

PORTRAIT OF HENRIETTA MARIA, WIFE OF CHARLES I

But the painter's days were numbered; his health rapidly declined. The king, greatly concerned, offered his physician £300 if he could effect a cure. Efforts were unavailing. On December 9, 1641, Van Dyck died, leaving his wife and a daughter eight days old.

Van Dyck is one of the world's great masters. He had extraordinary facility and bril-

liance, taste, good color, sound draftsman-ship. It is as a portrait painter that he takes highest rank. His subject pieces, accomplished as they are, lack originality and vitality, have something artificial about them, and at times fail to carry conviction. His greatest portraits are among the noblest works of their kind in the world. Nor did he ever drop very far below their standard

Although, especially in his weaker works, he flattered sitters, gave them an air of courtliness and distinction without regard for truth, descended, in short, to studio recipes, he generally kept fairly true to character; often his characterization is astonishing, forceful even in portraits that at first glance appear simply sumptuously decorative and somewhat superficial.

His nature was not robust; it was more receptive than creative. His genius, unlike the greater painters', was more derivative than original. He lacked Titian's sweep, grandeur, and fire, Rembrandt's poetry and insight into humanity, Rubens' exuberant vitality and creative power, Velasquez's sincerity and subtle search for truth. Van Dyck can fittingly be compared with Raphael; their lives had much in common. Both had febrile brilliance, that sort of facile genius to which things come easily; both were vastly productive during a short life; both burned themselves out at an early age with overwork and overindulgence; the work of both is characterized by the same sort of taste, of tact, of rather feminine refinement and loveliness, of a sort of passion for beauty and elegance.

To-day pictures by Van Dyck bring enormous prices. He was so prolific, however, and worked so largely for private patrons that it is easier to obtain examples of his work than it is to obtain pictures by many other great masters. To some extent the value of Van Dyck's work has been hurt by the extraordinary number of copies or repetitions that exist of his pictures. It was a common thing in his day for people ordering a portrait from Van Dyck to have copies made of it for presentation to friends much as one has copies of a favorite photograph made to-day. Sometimes these copies were made by Van Dyck himself; sometimes by his pupils working under his direction and possibly with his aid; sometimes they were the work of entirely independent artists. A letter exists from a sitter Van Dyck painted stating that £50 was to be paid the master for the picture and suggesting that certain copies be made by another hand at £8 each. Of the famous "Three Children of Charles I with a Collie Dog" in Turin two well-known repetitions are known; of the "Three Children with Two Spaniel Dogs" at Windsor there exists six repetitions; and of the



In Windsor Castle

PORTRAIT GROUP OF THE CHILDREN OF CHARLES I



In the Louvre

CHARLES I AT THE HUNT

"Five Children of Charles I with a Boarhound" no less than nine repetitions exist, several of great excellence. Of the famous "James, Duke of Lennox, with a Greyhound" in the Metropolitan Museum, generally accepted as the original, five other examples exist in private collections in England. These many repetitions of Van Dyck's portraits offer difficult problems to the expert; with half a dozen variants of a single portrait all of the same epoch, all fairly expert, with several possibly containing something of the master's own handiwork, the selection of the original is a very nice question.

Van Dyck is well represented in the great European museums largely by the work he did for royalty. Windsor Castle is a store-

house of his art. Many of his best canvases have found their way to America.

Excellent examples are in the Morgan, Frick, Widener, and Taft collections. Among other museums he is well represented in Boston, in Worcester, and in the Chicago Art Institute. The Metropolitan Museum, with twelve Van Dycks, contains a brilliant showing of his work covering all periods of his career. Of the Metropolitan pictures, the most celebrated is the "Duke of Lennox," but only second in interest are the superb "Marchesa Durazzo" and the "Lucas van Uffel" of the Altman group in this splendid collection of Van Dyck's work now always on view for the pleasure and benefit of the American people.



In the Royal Museum, Amsterdam

PORTRAIT OF PRINCE WILLIAM II AND HIS WIFE, PRINCESS MARIE STUART



In Windsor Castle

PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND HIS BROTHER



"THE MAN AT THE WINDOW"



PORTRAIT OF THE PRINCE OF RHODOKANAKIS



In the Metropolitan Museum, New York

PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF LENNOX



In the Metropolitan Museum, New York

PORTRAIT OF A LADY



In the Louvre

PORTRAIT OF A LADY AND HER DAUGHTER



PORTRAIT OF THE MARCHESA DI BRIGNOLA-SALA



PORTRAIT OF LORD PHILIP WHARTON



THE LUTE PLAYER



In the Louvre

VIRGIN AND CHILD (La Vierge aux Donateurs)



ACHIAVELLI ✧ ✧

*A Man Whose Name
Became an Adjective*

BY E. M. DOLE

The dictionary makes an adjective of the name Machiavelli, meaning an iniquitous monster, a colossus of evil scheming. The man in the street understands the phrase, "a Machiavellian plan." He would laugh if you used it to express pure devotion to country, love of liberty, zeal for virtue.

Yet contemporaries of the Italian patriot and diplomatist praised the high purpose that governed all he did. They recognized the value of his system of political science, as set down in "The Prince," "Art of War," "Florentine Histories," and other learned works.

It was admitted that many of his theories about government and war were brutal, but it was not till long after his death that the myth of personal cruelty and wicked intrigue enveloped him.

Macaulay and others of Machiavelli's defenders cite the demoralized times in which he lived and point out that his motives were indisputably honest, no matter what means he advocated to bring about what he labored for—the independence of his motherland. He put forth baldly the axiom that the politician and the diplomat must on occasion dissemble the truth. "It is right to keep faith," he agrees in "The Prince," "but nevertheless experience has proved that the princes who have achieved great deeds are those who have known how to bewilder men's brains by cunning, and in the end have succeeded better than those whose actions have been ruled by honor."

Machiavelli's background was Florence in the Middle Ages. He was born in 1469, in a house at Number 16 Guicciardini Street, and died in the same house June 22, 1527. His family were well-to-do, and he received a fair education. At the age of twenty-eight he became secretary to the war cabinet of the Florentine Republic. It was his duty to write letters and undertake missions within and beyond the frontiers. He liked the excitement of the life, and from the beginning attracted attention by his aptitude for analysis and observation. He

was of fair height, had snapping dark eyes, and a mouth rather sarcastic in expression that could on occasion break into a winning smile. He was so successful as an envoy that honors and responsibilities were heaped upon him. He seemed to be endowed with a psychic faculty for knowing how to adjust the cause of a difficulty and an equal talent for fathoming the minds of kings and nations. Combined with this extraordinary ability he had a two-edged wit, a brilliant and original intellect, and a nature free from selfishness. To the end of his life he was ready to serve his government in any capacity without thought of personal benefit. He



NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI (1469-1527)

The Florentine statesman and author who first advocated national military organization to replace the mercenary military service in vogue during the thirteenth century

never made a ducat out of his many important missions beyond his salary, and at his death his family were left in positive want. With his beloved wife, Marietta, and his five children he lived his last days in a small villa a few miles from Florence, devoting his time to writing works that have since been translated into all languages and have gone through innumerable editions. These, and the political unity of Italy, are his monument.

He was a brilliant product of his time; and he can be judged fairly only when considered as a man of that time.



GOOD-LUCK STONES

BY GERTRUDE LINNELL

Philosophers, ancient and modern, loudly warn against so much as naming a dreaded thing, lest the spoken word should give it being. People of various ages have thought to counteract evil by repeating lucky or optimistic phrases, or engraving cabalistic signs on metal or gems. Usually these lucky charms were inscribed in the form of positive statements, "I have knowledge," "The doors of heaven are opened to me," "This very hour!" Long exhortations could not be engraved on gems, so magic words and signs were invented—initials, crosses, swastikas, monograms. The color and family of each gem had its own special significance and power. With the aid of a symbol, a system of theology could be expressed, or a prayer to the gods for protection from accidents and diseases. A single sign might stand for a whole catalogue of joys. An Egyptian New Year's card in the form of a jewel scarab is now in the Metropolitan Museum, dating from about the time of King Tutankhamen. A more effective token than a printed greeting the scarab seems, and the wish is as fresh as it was three thousand years ago.

Who believes in superstitions now? Some women shudder at opals. Children wear strings of amber for the prevention of croup. There are men who profess to believe their affairs would go to smash if they lost their pocket pieces, and novelty shops do an excellent business in articles guaranteed to bring luck. The superstitious have always had firm faith in natural markings in stones—stars, fairy crosses, concentric rings. These talismans, it is thought, are

presided over by spirits of one sort or another.

The wearing of jewelry probably began not with the desire for ornament but for protection: necklaces for the throat; nose and ear rings to prevent evil spirits from entering the body; forehead pendants to protect the eyes; bracelets and anklets for the arms and legs.

Talismans, in the belief of some, are not endowed

with the prevailing idea of general luck, but attribute definite properties to each kind of stone. Sapphires bring peace of mind, but they must be worn only by those of pure and holy life. The Chinese bury small bags of red stones under the corners of their houses to distract the attention of evil spirits. The lodestone is the actor's gem, for it fixes the attention of an audience. Lovers use it for the same reason! Opals were once highly valued for the cure of eye diseases. Through the West they have become the pariah of gems; in the East they shine with undiminished splendor in the talismanic lists.

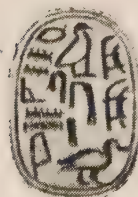
In Egypt, the ankh, symbol of life, and the scarab, symbol of immortality, were both much used. There is a story in an old papyrus of a Pharaoh's son who set his heart on obtaining a marvelous book said to contain all wisdom. The book had been stolen centuries before from the god Thoth by a scholar, on whom Thoth had brought death as a revenge, but in his tomb the old scholar

still guarded the magic book. The prince searched until he found the sepulcher, and broke in, but there he encountered difficulties, for the Ka, or spirit, of the scholar was living happily with his long-dead wife and child, and the book was between them. The prince argued, begged, threatened, but the scholar's Ka refused to give it up. At last the prince proposed playing for it, and to this the Ka agreed. But the prince was at a disadvantage again, for



SIR RICHARD BURTON

A figure in Madame Tussaud's Wax Works, London, showing the charm that the noted traveler scrupulously wore during his desert explorations



SCARAB
SEAL



SCARAB
CHARM



the Ka, by virtue of the book, was all-wise, and at each throw he won. At the first hesanktheprince into the earth to his knees, at the second to his waist, and at the

third up to his armpits. Then the prince called his brother to run quickly for his father's amulet. The papyrus does not tell what that amulet was, but evidently it was very powerful, for it released the prince from the old scholar's spell, whereupon he returned to his home, a little wiser perhaps, but content to let the source of wisdom remain in the realm of the hereafter.

China, India, Ceylon, Assyria, Persia, and the old American civilizations put firm reliance on the efficacy of jewels and charms to ward off or cure sickness, bring good luck, protect from accident, and assure domestic felicity. One of the most famous jewels of history was the ancient breastplate of the Jewish high priest. By its flashing was revealed the will of God. The breastplate is now thought to be among the vast uncatalogued treasures of the Shah of Persia. The ruler is also the proud owner of two talismans both linked with the name of Mohammed. The first is a large square of amber, said to have fallen from heaven in the time of the prophet, and credited with the faculty of rendering its owner invulnerable. The second is a gold box, set with splendid emeralds, which, blessed by Mohammed, has the ability to make its owner invisible at will—provided only that he be a celibate. It is unrecorded that a shah of Persia has ever yet foregone marriage in order to test the magic power of the golden casket.

A celebrated lucky piece is the so-called Lee Penny (really a Moorish stone set in an old English coin), which gave the title to Sir Walter Scott's novel, "The Talisman." The

legend of the Lee Penny is that a crusading knight, Sir Simon Lockhart of Lee, meeting a Saracen horseman, challenged him to combat, and, gaining victory,

carried him back to camp to be held for ransom. The aged mother of the Saracen appeared in time to buy her son's release, and, in paying the sum required, inadvertently dropped a small round stone, which she hastily snatched up and returned to her purse. Sir Simon, realizing that it was a prized talisman, demanded it as a part of the ransom price. So the lucky stone came to Scotland, where it has remained ever since. It has often



been employed as a specific in cattle diseases and in the treatment of hydrophobia. When the strict Scotch Church forbade the use of magic practices, they excepted "only the Lee Penny, to which it has pleased God to annex healing virtues."

When paying a visit in 1804 to the tomb of Charlemagne in Aix-la-Chapelle, Empress Josephine was seized with the desire to possess some of the royal relics

that pleased her fancy. Among those her fond husband obtained for her by characteristic Napoleonic means was the precious sapphire talisman enclosing a piece of wood said to be from the Holy Cross. The jewel was afterwards bequeathed to Napoleon III, and Empress Eugénie, with firm faith in its protective virtues, wore it when she gave birth to the Prince Imperial.

There is an old English legend that a ring placed in a bird's nest among the eggs and young birds will acquire a talismanic power of especial value in furthering affairs of the heart and domestic felicity. I know of its being tried once, but when the birds had flown away the ring was no longer in the nest. Perhaps the birds took it with them as a talisman to insure a happy season in the Southland.



ANCIENT EGYPTIAN AMULETS

Magic played such an important part in the religion of the early Egyptians that they surrounded themselves with countless varieties of charms. The illustrations on this page show four of the several hundred in the Murch Collection at the Metropolitan Museum, New York. These charms were carried on the person or hung up in the home, and no less than one hundred and four were considered essential to the proper furnishing of a mummy. The amulets were made of wood, limestone, bronze, gold, ivory, lapis lazuli, carnelian, and many other materials





FRANÇOIS VILLON

Poet, Cut-throat, and Jailbird

BY CLEMENT KING

Villon—"sad, bad, glad, mad Villon," Swinburne calls him—was the first and greatest poet of what is termed by moderns the realistic school. In a few years, six, to be exact, we shall celebrate the five-hundredth anniversary of the day he was born.

He plotted, he stole, he murdered, he was a reckless vagabond, but he had a golden gift for writing the truth in verse, and his poems have survived the centuries. Villon was frank about his superiors and his companions; he was frank about himself. He wrote poems of unrivaled beauty. The same hand penned lines so indecently coarse that translators are embarrassed in trying to render them faithfully into English.

In Villon's time morals were at a low ebb, and men that administered the law were often as contemptuous of it as the offenders that were brought before them. His stanzas recorded life as he saw it, in an age of poverty, ugliness, and sensuality. His friends were men of dark deeds, unspeakable deeds. Villon the poet was Villon the cut-throat and jailbird.

He was born François Montcorbier, at Paris, in the year 1431. His parents were poor and obscure. Of his mother, to whom he was devoted, we know nothing except that she was pious, and that we know because in memory of her and her piety her talented, evil-living son wrote one of the most perfect things in the realm of litera-

ture—a picture of a mother on her knees.

The roistering poet, acclaimed master by lyricists and imagists of our time, and of all time since his shadowed life was so mysteriously snuffed out, was a peaked waif wandering the streets of medieval Paris, when the look of nascent genius in his eyes attracted a good old man named Canon Villon. He was rich and kindly, and did his best to give the urchin a fair start. He took the boy to live with him in a monastery near the Sorbonne, gave him his honored name, and sent him to the university. There

François learned many things besides philosophy and the arts. In the 1440's the taverns of the Sorbonnedistrict were ante-chambers of the classroom, where youths discussed all sorts of topics, and planned unholy schemes and orgies.

The first poem Villon wrote described a bloody affair between the Sorbonne students and the military. Before he had reached the age of manhood his literary endowment was recognized by the hilarious frequenters of the "Mule" and the "Pineapple."

While still an

undergraduate Villon, venturesome and eager to taste life, joined a band of robbers and counterfeiterers known and feared throughout France. They were called *Coquillards*; their emblem was a cockle shell. They met in disreputable inns, whose keepers welcomed them as good spenders. Villon, the young recruit, indited ballads in the speech of these merry scoundrels, and often entertained tavern groups with his metrical sallies.

The protégé of Guillaume Villon had aristocratic friends too, whom he met in his foster father's salon. They were men and women high in the church and society. But he was a wastrel by choice, and preferred for



SCENE IN THE PLAY "IF I WERE KING"

Founded on the life of Villon, and for many years a vehicle for the art of the American actor, Mr. E. H. Sothern

THE MENTOR

steady company idlers and crooks. Yet his mind was sensitive to beauty and held exquisite thoughts. He "knew everything except himself," he once set down in despair.

After he left the Sorbonne, which gave him the degree of master of arts, the poet was charged with stabbing a man (it was in self-defense, he said), and was in exile until pardoned by the king. He was scarcely out of that trouble when he helped to rob a chapel, and had to clear out of Paris again. Between escapades he wrote the "Little Testament," a series of fictitious and cynical legacies in verse. His companions in the chapel robbery were imprisoned; some were hanged. Villon, trying to forget them, wandering alone, was taken up for a crime unnamed and consigned to a cell, black, stifling. When released after three months, he drifted back to Paris, spiritless and broken, though still young—only about thirty years of age.

He had been away five years. He resolved to make new contacts, and he began to write as he had not written before. He forswore his old ways, but his reputation was against him, and several times he was taken by the police on suspicion. But, in prison and out, the flame of the muse burned steadily. His lyrics won him praise as the foremost poet in France. Once, while under sentence of death,

he wrote ballads so pure in thought and language and so beautifully composed that they have never been surpassed in any tongue. Freed of the charge that held him behind bars, he continued with the "Big Testament," his grand work, which consisted of one hundred and seventy-three stanzas, including twenty ballads.

Once again he was sent into exile, forbidden to return to Paris for ten years, under pain of death from the sword. In January of 1463 he bade his mother and Canon Villon a last farewell.

What became of him? No one knows. Searchers have never penetrated the veil drawn here across the fortunes of the hapless poet. For the rest of the world his story ended when he "walked off into the unknown" that wintry day.

His romance, novelized in "If I Were King" by Justin McCarthy, was presented on the stage for many seasons, and is the theme of other plays, poems, and pictures. In his "Little Testament" appears the famous "Ballad of the Women of Old Time" ("Where are the snows of yesteryear?"). He willed to posterity lines extolling women, counseling the wicked—left to the lovesick a bowl of tears, to Katherine de Vaucelles his dead heart, to Mother Earth his tired body.



From a painting by Amedee Forestier

FRANÇOIS VILLON, PRINCE OF BALLAD-MONGERS

Composing verses amidst the ribald noises of a low tavern frequented by himself and disreputable companions



WHEN POISONING WAS A FINE ART

BY VANCE ARMSTRONG

Agrippina, mother of Nero, was the most famous royal lady of ancient times who used poison for murderous ends. She was charged with the assassination of her second husband, Crispus Passienus, and her third, the Emperor Claudius. The notorious Locusta supplied her with a dish of deadly mushrooms for the latter. A certain drug that this skilful professional poisoner had prepared for Britannicus by order of Nero was without fatal result, and she was soundly beaten for her failure, her life being spared only on the condition that the next attempt was successful. Nero was not disappointed on second trial. At a banquet given in the imperial palace Britannicus asked for water. He drank it, and died in Nero's presence. After this episode Nero gave Locusta apartments in his own palace so that he might always have her services conveniently within call.

What the art of poisoning has gained in security it has lost in romance. The increased facilities for detection and the great stride in the knowledge of pharmacutics have effectually destroyed the ardor and courage of dabblers in deadly drugs. Before primitive man had learned to shape his rude utensils or make drawings on the walls of caves, he was probably familiar with the use of poisonous herbs. That the art of poisoning is as old as human history, ancient Egyptian, Persian, Sanskrit, and Chinese

records testify. The Romans learned about poisons from the Egyptians and Greeks. Poisoning was generally practiced by them during the two centuries that preceded the Christian era. At one time in Rome so many deaths occurred that an investigation was ordered, and it was discovered that patricians of the highest rank were experimenting freely with the lethal drugs.

It was not until the Middle Ages that poisoning took on the dignity of an art. Necromancers and sorcerers of every de-

scription who were adepts in the manufacture of deadly and subtle poisons were patronized by people of all ranks. In Italy the poisoner was everywhere in evidence. Members of the Borgia family were particularly famous for their skill in an era of accomplished poisoners. Countless stories illustrate the ingenuity and cunning with which they administered their deadly liquids and powders. The name of Lucrezia Borgia has for centuries been synonymous with that of poisoner, though some modern historians assure us that she was innocent of this



ADRIENNE LE COEUR

In this celebrated portrait by Charles Antoine Coypée the adored Adrienne is represented in the part of Cornelia. She clasps a funeral urn. When the tragedienne was stricken suddenly and died of a mysterious illness, the word "poison" was whispered about, and a noble lady, a rival in love, was accused

crime. John Addington Symonds says: "The legend which made her a poison-brewing mænad has been proven a lie—but only at the expense of the whole society in which she lived."

The seventeenth century was the Golden Age of Poisoning. In Paris alone there were hundreds of sorcerers and palmists who had their cabinets stocked with many strange poisons, some brought from remote parts of the mysterious East. These harpies were always ready at a price to assist in the commission of a murder. The conscience of the

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public, hardened by familiarity, seems never to have been shocked. With people of high degree, poison became ever-increasingly the favorite weapon. It was the age of elegance, and elegance was observed in the removal of an impediment to love or riches. Neither brave man nor exquisite woman disdained such a simple aid to their schemes. The court of Louis XIV emulated those intrepid and ruthless princes of fifteenth-century Italy who, when they murdered, carried out their enterprise with picturesque ingenuity.

They frankly spoke their admiration for the *grandes dames* of the same period who, like Catharine de' Medici, poisoned the pages of books, silenced their victims with deadly fumes from jeweled fans, or fatally inoculated them with a needle prick concealed in a seal ring. The Duchesse de Bouillon, who managed to rid herself of Adrienne Le Cœur, her rival in the favor of the Marechal de Saxe, was probably inspired to carry out her scheme in this way by stories she had read of certain Venetian and Tuscan princesses. The murder of Henriette, sister-in-law of Louis XIV, wife of the Duc d'Orléans, by the effeminate Chevalier de Lorraine, seems

singularly lacking in imagination in comparison with other dramatic poisonings of the time. With the chevalier it simply meant employing a servant to sift a white powder into the food Madame was eating.

A writer commenting on the curious state of affairs in France during the decadent seventeenth century is struck by the acquiescence of the victims of the poisoners. "The poisoned had as fine an appreciation of the craft as the poisoner. He played the game with a courage equal to that of the one who prepared his death. If he succumbed,

luck was against him—if he survived, he showed no malice. On either side was a feeling of sport. The victim knew the rules, and the stakes for which he played."

Notorious poisoners in France were Madame Brinvilliers and the sorceress Voisin. The latter was a monster "who sold death in packets as grocers sell sugar across the counter." She was an adept in the art of black magic, but the chief source of her wealth was derived from her traffic in poison. The most bitter complaint against her seems

to have been the high prices she charged for her services. The beautiful and impetuous Madame de Montespan was one of her clients, and only an accident saved Louis XIV from their attempt to poison him. Voisin, found out at last, met her fate with composure. "She surrendered her soul to the devil very prettily," said Madame de Sevigné. "I am loaded with so many crimes," cried Voisin to her confessor, "that I could not wish God to work a miracle to snatch me from the flames."

The Marquise de Brinvilliers was a woman of unusual beauty, fascinating manners, and quick wit, who seemed to have poisoned chiefly for the love

of excitement and danger. Disguised as a sister of mercy she visited the hospitals of Paris and stealthily administered different poisons to the patients, carefully noting the results. Her lovely face and sympathetic manner completely won the confidence of physicians and invalids. She poisoned everyone who stood in the way of her ambition, and even those who bored her. Once she poisoned her own daughter because she thought her stupid, but was moved by compassion just in time to administer an antidote and save the child's life.



LUCREZIA BORGIA

A medieval beauty, sister of the ruthless and perfidious Cesare Borgia. Both were frequently charged with the crime of poisoning



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A Glass of Wine with the Borgias

The youth hesitates, hand on glass. Will he obey the imperious look of command in the eyes of the beautiful Lucrezia—the magnet that has drawn him to this supper in the pontifical apartment? Will he yield to the ingratiating advances of Cæsar Borgia and partake of the proffered cup? Or will he be warned before it is too late by the sinister glance shot from the cruel eyes of the old Pontiff as he coldly calculates the destruction of the young gallant?

To comply or refuse is equally hazardous. If he decline the poisoned draught will he escape the knife of the hired assassin even now lurking in the shadows of the papal palace?

Rodrigo Borgia (Alexander VI), Lucrezia and Cæsar formed the diabolical trinity which sat for eleven years upon the papal throne in Rome, an impious parody of the Holy Trinity—the most perfect incarnation of evil that ever existed on earth. How many gallant lives thus darkly and without commotion passed out of sight, whirled away by the headlong torrent of the ambition of that terrible triumvirate, is told as only that great weaver of word pictures, Alexandre Dumas, could tell it in

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE CROWELL PUBLISHING COMPANY AT SPRINGFIELD, OHIO, U. S. A.

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EDITOR

THE ADDRESS OF EXECUTIVE AND EDITORIAL OFFICES, 381 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY.

THE SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, \$4.00 A YEAR

RUTH WOOD THOMPSON, *Assistant Editor*

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THE OPEN LETTER



HERE is nothing like housecleaning to prove the true value of things—books, magazines, pictures, souvenirs, and the numberless odds and ends that accumulate during the days and weeks. Anything that can stand the test of a thorough housecleaning must be a thing of real value in the life of the home. If a book can meet and face down the challenge of the militant housewife, the citadel has been held and the book is there to stay. So too with a magazine; and so it *actually* happens to be with *The Mentor*—as the following from a reader assures us:

"Down here, every once in a while, they clean out the old publications lying around.

"But whenever this housecleaning takes place they do *not* throw out old *Mentors*. They are ever new, ever too useful, too instructive, too valuable for reference purposes to throw away.

"They are very comforting little books to pick up for short reading, and one is ever learning from them."

The writer of the foregoing will surely find confirmation of his words in the present number—which covers a subject of universal, human interest in an article by one who knows more about rings, talismans, gems, and precious stones than anyone else now living. A distinguished East Indian scholar, Professor Raman of Calcutta, stated, on arriving in America a short time ago, that he wanted particularly to visit New York, "not to see the high buildings, but to meet Dr. George F. Kunz." He came from a land of pearls and precious stones to visit the foremost gem authority in the world.

The February issue will be devoted to Central America, and will be an important

number—far more than a mere chronicle of travel. The writer of the leading article, Mr. Thomas F. Lee, has gone up and down the trails of Latin America for more than twenty years, and knows the lands and peoples as few other men do. He tells us the things that we want to know about the six nations of Central America—describes the scenery, climate, and physical characteristics of the countries, and their natural resources. He also tells us enough about the people, politics, and governments to give us an idea of the character of the Latin-American. Hon. Henry Lane Wilson, Stephen Bonsal, Sylvanus Morley, and other writers of authority contribute special articles. The illustrations are wide in range of subject, and varied in interest—selected from a large collection of photographs gathered by Mr. Lee in the course of years.

The March *Mentor* will be a special Conrad Number, with a leading feature that no Conrad reader will want to miss—the author's life story, told in the author's own words and printed in *The Mentor* with his consent. Mr. Conrad supervised the manuscript only a short time before his death. This will be followed by "Conrad's Last Hours," written by one who knew him well, and who was with him during the final days of his life. Friends of Mr. Conrad, and his publishers, have coöperated with us to make this a red-letter *Mentor*.

Good numbers will succeed each other, month after month; two or three on travel and adventure, several on biography, history, or popular science—and all of them illustrated with pictures that not only attract and interest, but inform the reader.

W. D. Moffat
• Editor



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